

With millions of Americans still looking for work, Rep. Peter Welch on Tuesday opposed efforts to slash job-creating energy efficiency programs in a 2012 spending bill. A Welch-authored amendment sought to restore funding to these programs but was voted down 123 to 300.

The Energy and Water Appropriations Act of 2012 (H.R. 2354) cuts the energy efficiency budget by 27 percent. Impacted programs include fuel efficient vehicle technologies, bio-refinery research and development and home weatherization assistance. Welch's amendment would have restored funding to 2011 levels.

"Slashing energy efficiency programs, especially in a struggling economy, is penny wise and pound foolish," Welch said. "Energy efficiency investments create a win-win-win: American manufacturing and contractor jobs are created. Consumers' energy bills are lowered. And the environment is improved. With energy bills rising, 9.2 percent unemployment and American manufacturing industries struggling to survive, this is no time to gut energy efficiency programs."

Welch is the House leader on investments in energy efficiency to create jobs and save money. Last year, he wrote the Home Star Energy Retrofit Act (H.R. 5019), which passed the House with bipartisan support. The legislation would have helped three million families retrofit, renovate and insulate their homes, putting 170,000 Americans to work. Earlier this year, President Obama included Welch's legislation in his 2012 budget request.

Welch spoke from the House floor Monday evening in support of his amendment. To see the video, [CLICK HERE](#). The House is still debating H.R. 2354. A final vote is expected Thursday.